

DEFIES WORLD TO WED EX-CONVICT

(Continued from First Page.)
throat and a heart throb. It is the story of a sacrifice, of many sacrifices, such as few human beings have been called upon to make.

Story Dwarfs Fiction.
So exceptional is this story that it dwarfs fiction, and proves once more that there is more real romance in common everyday life than the highly paid short-story writers would cram into their entertaining narratives. Truth is stranger than fiction, indeed. Way back, it is so far back that Dr. Dudding doesn't like to speak of it often—he was a successful man, as we understand the phrase, in West Virginia. He had a good position, a devoted wife and adorable children.

Then the world seemed to turn upside down and Dudding found himself buried through space and into the very depths of hell.

Killed His Uncle.
He killed a man. Shot him dead. It was his uncle. They had been quarreling about money. The old man, a blueblood in hand, raised his arm to annihilate his nephew. He did strike, the blow splitting the young man's head. Staggering, his face covered with blood, he dragged himself

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Jewels Worth \$81,560 Left By Mrs. Palmer; Pearls Her Favorites

CHICAGO, June 1.—Pearls and diamonds were the favorite jewels of the late Mrs. Potter Palmer, for years the acknowledged leader of Chicago society. Mrs. Palmer lived abroad for several years and was a distinguished figure in the most aristocratic circles of London and Paris. She wore fewer jewels than most women of her wealth and her collection of gems did not compare with those of many of the women of princely houses in Europe.

When she died recently she possessed jewels valued at \$81,560, according to an inventory filed in the probate court here. Her most prized ornament was a necklace of eighty-three Oriental pearls with diamond clasps, valued at \$40,000. Another one of her treasured adornments, which she wore on all formal occasions, was a collar containing seven large diamonds and 2,268 pearls, valued at \$30,000.

Mrs. Palmer inherited an estate of \$20,000,000 from her husband. Her personal fortune, according to the inventory, was \$1,600,000.

across the room and, when a second blow threatened to put him out of his misery and send him into eternity, Dudding pulled out a revolver he chanced to have in his hip pocket and fired.

The uncle fell dead. Dudding was taken to jail. Then the trial came. The whole town was divided, for and against him. The jury refused to believe the man when he pleaded self-defense. His uncle was too influential a man in the community, and his death must be avenged.

Years In Prison.
For a while it looked as if Dudding would be given a verdict of death for murder in the first degree. But even that jury couldn't overlook the many extenuating circumstances and he was sentenced to five years in the Moundsville, West Virginia, prison.

That one word, "guilty," was the decree of fate which separated him once and for all from the world in which he had lived up to that time. His friends gave him black looks, refusing to know him, and his family turned from him. He was a convict, a murderer, and no one, not even the woman who until then had been a loving, devoted wife, had a place in their hearts for a man who had taken another's life.

So on his way to prison he went, leaving behind him happiness, success, home, friends, life itself—and plunging into the dark, hopeless recesses of hell of confinement.

And now, Dudding said yesterday as he, his voice growing husky with emotion, tried to master his feelings, "I know not whether laws be right or wrong, but in my heart I was not a criminal. I was a normal adult with the strength and frailties of the rest of mankind."

"I was sent to prison to pay for my deed with five years. But the five years were completed the bill was not yet paid. Instead, I had to continue to pay in the struggle I had to make to gain a position once more in decent society."

But when the prison gates opened before him the very creak of their hinges seemed to cry out to him: "You'll never get out of here, you'll be here for the rest of your life. In his heart of hearts conscious of his innocence, entered the prison with the idea of helping his unfortunate, crime-ridden mates."

Rid Prison of Grafters.
His tale of his watchfulness over the other men, how he rid the prison of the grafters, how he was instrumental in abolishing the terrible whipping post, is a story in itself, which Dr. Dudding has promised to tell in his book.

"They were taking food away from the patients in the hospital and selling it to the prisoners," relates Dr. Dudding. "Eggs, milk, beef, bacon, and fruit that should have gone to the patients were constantly sold by the attendants. They tried to bribe me, and I refused to be bribed. Gradually, however, the matter came to the attention of the warden and the grafting was stopped."

Dudding never forgot to help the other prisoners in every way he could. He related:

"There was the case of old Sandy Picklen, a colored man who lay dying with tuberculosis. I went to him and said, 'Sandy, haven't you some people to write for?' He said, 'Yes, but I can't write.' I said, 'I'll write them a letter if you want me to.' I did. Several days later a letter came from his mother. I read it to him just half an hour before he died, happy to have heard from her, whom he had forgotten and neglected."

Assigned to Hospital.
Later Dudding, who in the bright days had studied medicine was assigned to the hospital.

"After I had been there five or six days," he says, "some attendants came in carrying a man on a stretcher. He was unconscious. He had been whipped almost to death. I asked what the trouble was, whereupon another prisoner whispered to me that I had better keep quiet and mind my own business."

"He had been beaten in the tower. People to his hands and his feet together. This man was whipped until it seemed there was no skin left from middle of his back down to his knees."

The whippings were regularly prescribed. A man would be sentenced to five or ten lashes, but when he was given the sentence of five lashes he usually got fifty, and when given ten they lashed him a hundred times. I

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saw one man who, after he was whipped and taken down, was handcuffed to two rings seven feet up on the wall and compelled to stand there half hanging to the rings for ten hours."

It was not until a new warden was assigned to the prison that the whipping post was abolished.
On January 2, 1914, Dudding left the prison a free, but physically broken-down man. He borrowed \$500, and within a week went out on the road armed with a stock of samples and with energy and enthusiasm enough to carry the most degenerated man to success. Of his experiences and his struggles with a prejudiced world, Dudding says:

"Four months later I had to return home, broken in spirit, a failure, an outcast among my old acquaintances. My money was gone, my nerves were shattered, my hopes had vanished. It seemed as if everybody was against me. For hours at a stretch I would lose myself in morbid thoughts, standing on a street corner, unconscious of the passersby and the throngs that stood to stare at me."

"One Sunday afternoon, feeling utterly beaten, almost longing for the apathetic life of prison, which at least was secluded, the idea came to me that there were hundreds, thousands of men in just the same position—men who wanted to make good but, finding the struggle too hard, easily slipped back into the ranks of the unclaimed."

Founded Relief Society.

"My mind was set on founding the Prisoners' Relief Society to help those who were in my plight. I did not want to slip into a life of crime and I believed that most other so-called criminals felt as I did. I immediately conferred with eight men of high standing in Washington and with \$14 borrowed money we applied for a charter in the State of West Virginia. Thus was the Prisoners' Relief Society launched."

For five years Dudding worked, the society being transferred in the meantime to Washington, where it now occupies the entire building at 509 E street northwest. Letha Watts, the first secretary, a devoted young woman, died, and her dying wish was that Miss Evalyn Abbott, then one of her assistants, succeed her as secretary.

Secretary Shared Sorrows.

For years Miss Abbott has worked faithfully side by side with Dr. Dudding, sharing his sorrows and his joys in helping prisoners. And now they are to be married.

"I don't see how Miss Abbott can love me," he said yesterday, "but we are doing this for the sake of the work we are carrying on."

But Miss Abbott doesn't think so. Speaking of him, she says: "The story of his loneliness tells why I have been his friend, and I believe that you will agree with me that he needed a friend. Earl Dudding is a man who has suffered as few men before him have suffered."

And now the two, who are to be married within thirty days, are looking forward to the time when they will be able to help thousands of ex-convicts every day, where now they are aiding only a few, because of the lack of funds.

No Luxuries To Follow.

When she is married to Dr. Dudding, Miss Abbott will not be introduced to a sumptuous apartment, with luxuries and pomp. She will remain right in the building where her husband-to-be makes his home and she will share the privations he does. It is also probable that he will continue to do the cooking as he does now.

For it is a hard task the two have before them, but they have set their faces to the sky, whence cometh help and encouragement. Thousands of prisoners have been aided by these two devoted people in starting life over again.

"But anyone can see," said the doctor, "that we need money if we are to continue our work. They come here and ask us for jobs. We have to write letters, thousands of them, to responsible firms and we place them in most instances."

Need More Funds.

"But last night a pile of 500 letters didn't go out because we didn't have the money to pay for postage."

"Then we need money to care for these men while they are here. They need clothes and a place to sleep while they are here."

It turned out as Dr. Dudding was telling the story of his struggle to keep the society going, that he had given his best suit to one of these men and that a half a dozen of these ex-convicts had spent the night on the floor of the office, for lack of other accommodations.

In most cases the society is able to secure free transportation for the men in sending them out to their newly found jobs. The clerical work is done by girls who are studying stenography and typewriting at Washington business schools. They come in and for the privilege of practicing "speed" on machines furnished free by a typewriter manufacturing company, write the society's letters.

Praised by Rotary Club.

The society has been, on several occasions, investigated by other organizations, among them the Rotary Club. The report of the club says, in part: "The patient perseverance of Dr. Dudding in the face of tremendous opposition is marvelous, and deserves not only the support, but the admiration of all."

As stated before, Dr. Dudding and Miss Abbott are to be married only for the sake of the work they have been carrying on. And they hope that by this union the organization will gain in greater effort and that a beginning will be made to put it on a sound business basis.

They are hoping that their many friends and supporters will make generous contributions to the funds of the society and thus help along the work they are doing. This is the only wedding gift they will accept.

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